CLAIMS

1. Apparatus for processing articles, comprising a hollow drum having permeable walls, at one end an inlet for receiving articles onto an inside surface of the permeable walls; at the other end an outlet for discharging articles from the drum; means for rotating the drum about an axis having at least a horizontal component at such speed that centrifugal force acting on the articles is sufficient to overcome the gravity acting on the articles, and progressing means for applying a first jet of fluid to the articles through the permeable wall, to displace the articles from the inside surface and in a direction away from the inlet towards the outlet.

2. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1, including rejection means for selectively applying a second jet of fluid to project rejected articles into means for removing rejected articles from the drum.

3. Apparatus as claimed in claim 1 [redacted], including inspection means directed at the inside surface of the permeable wall, and control means responsive to the output from inspection means to reject articles according to predetermined criteria and to operate said rejection means to apply said second jet of fluid selectively to remove the rejected articles.

4. Apparatus as claimed in claim 2, including inspection means directed at the outside surface of the wall; and control means responsive to the output from the inspection means to reject articles according to predetermined criteria and to operate said rejection means to apply said second jet of fluid selectively to remove the rejected unwanted articles.

5. Apparatus as claimed in claim 3 [redacted], wherein the rejection means is operable to apply a plurality of second jets selectively, and wherein the control means is operative to analyse output from the inspection means to select one or more second jets.

6. Apparatus as claimed in claim 5, wherein the inspection means is a line scan camera.

7. Apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1, wherein the first jet is arranged to displace articles in a direction having a component normal to and towards the axis of the drum and a component parallel to the axis and towards the outlet of the drum.

8. A plurality of apparatus as claimed in ~~any preceding~~ claim 1 arranged in sequence so that the outlet of one drum acts as an inlet to the next one.

9. A method for processing articles, comprising conveying the articles through an inlet and onto an inside surface of permeable walls of a hollow drum; rotating the drum about an axis having at least a horizontal component at such speed that centrifugal force acting on the articles is sufficient to overcome the gravity acting on the articles, and applying a first jet of fluid to the articles through the permeable wall, to displace the articles from the inside surface and in a direction away from the inlet.

10. A method as claimed in claim 9, including selectively applying a second jet of fluid to project rejected articles into means for removing rejected articles from the drum.

11. A method as claimed in claim 9, ~~or 10~~, including inspecting articles and rejecting articles according to predetermined criteria, and applying said second jet of fluid selectively to remove the rejected articles.

12. A method as claimed in claim 11, including analysing output from ~~the~~ a camera (used to inspect said articles) to select one or more second jets.